

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| As of: 2/4/26, 7:56 AM |
| Received: February 03, 2026 |
| Status: Posted |
| Posted: February 04, 2026 |
| Tracking No. ml6-uw5h-0iex |
| Comments Due: April 06, 2026 |
| Submission Type: API |

Docket: VA-2026-VACO-0001
Notices

Comment On: VA-2026-VACO-0001-0027
Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposals, Submissions, and Approvals: Application for Annual Clothing Allowance [FR Doc No: 2026-02202; OMB Control No. 2900-0198]

Document: VA-2026-VACO-0001-0029
Comment from The Black Veteran Newsletter, LLC on VA-2026-VACO-0001-0027

Submitter Information

Email: theblackveterannewsletter@gmail.com
Organization: The Black Veteran Newsletter, LLC

General Comment

I respectfully submit the following comments regarding the proposed revision of VA Form 10-8678 under the Paperwork Reduction Act.

The statutory and regulatory authority for the annual clothing allowance under 38 U.S.C. § 1162 and 38 C.F.R. § 3.810 is clear. However, practical access to this benefit remains inconsistent due to gaps in cross-referencing, notification practices, and system integration.

VA does provide information about the clothing allowance on its website and within certain VHA prosthetics processes. However, eligibility is not consistently cross-referenced against service-connected conditions, prescribed medications, or issued appliances. Many veterans prescribed medications for service-connected dermatological conditions, or issued orthopedic appliances that damage outer garments, are never affirmatively notified of potential eligibility.

When a condition is granted service connection and involves appliances or medications that may qualify under 38 C.F.R. § 3.810, VA should include standardized language in the rating decision notification letter advising the veteran of potential eligibility for the annual clothing allowance, along with a direct link to apply.

There is also an equity concern that warrants attention. Women veterans with service-connected gynecological conditions that cause excessive or irregular menstrual bleeding frequently report denial of clothing allowance benefits or lack of notice that they may qualify. In contrast, male veterans with service-connected urinary incontinence or gastrointestinal conditions that result in appliance use or garment damage more commonly receive notification or awards. If clothing damage is the qualifying standard, it must be applied consistently and without gender disparity.

VA should evaluate whether current adjudication guidance and internal training sufficiently address gender-specific medical conditions and their real-world impact on clothing damage.

In addition, veterans should be able to apply electronically through VA.gov, My HealtheVet, and the VA mobile application, with automated annual reminders prior to the August 1 deadline. Improved interoperability between Veterans Benefits Administration and Veterans Health Administration systems

would allow appliance issuance, medication profiles, and service-connected conditions to trigger proactive notice.

If the “One VA” framework is to be fully realized, systems must communicate in a way that reduces the burden on veterans rather than requiring them to navigate internal administrative divisions.

Finally, structured veteran user feedback should be incorporated into future redesign efforts. Veterans who rely on this benefit are best positioned to identify barriers in clarity, notification, and functionality.

The annual clothing allowance is a recurring benefit. Improved cross-referencing, equitable application, proactive notice, and integrated technology would significantly enhance its practical utility while reducing administrative burden.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.